

Correct as at 26th May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > Heavy vehicles > Towing connections > Drawbeam

12-3 Drawbeam

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory requirement

1. A drawbeam fitted to a heavy vehicle, other than a tractor to which section 12-4 applies or a recovery service vehicle, does not have evidence of certification to NZS 5446, ie

a) the drawbeam was fitted before the last CoF inspection, and after 1 January 1997, and no LANDATA record has been entered,

Note Before 1 January 1997 certification was required but for inspection purposes the LANDATA record need not be checked

or

b) the drawbeam was fitted after the last CoF inspection and

- i. a valid LT400 form has not been presented, or
- ii. the HVS certifier was not of category HVET or HMTD, or

c) there is no valid certification label or plate attached to the vehicle as required in Table 12-3-1.

2. The certification label or plate:

- a) is not indelible, or
- b) is illegible, or
- c) is not complete, or
- d) is not attached to the drawbeam in an easily visible position, or
- e) does not match the vehicle, or
- f) has obvious signs of tampering, or
- g) has expired.

3. An air assisted automatic coupling device fitted to a towing connection is not fitted with a failsafe system that prevents unintentional release.

- See also [Safety alert: Risk of vehicle separation – air operated auto coupling devices](#)

Mandatory equipment

4. A hook- or pin-type coupling does not have a locking device or a separate means of retaining this device in the locked position.

Condition and performance

5. A towing connection component is:

- a) damaged, deformed, cracked or has significantly deteriorated, or
- b) worn beyond manufacturer's specifications, or
- c) not securely attached, or
- d) missing, or
- e) not mounted in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.

6. The towing pin diameter is worn to less than (Note 1):

- a) 36.4mm for a 40mm pin, or
- b) 46.4mm for a 50mm pin.

7. A towing hook, pin or ball has been repaired or welded.

8. Towing connection components fitted to a vehicle must ensure that a secure connection can be maintained between the towing and towed vehicles under all conditions of loading and operation for which the vehicle was constructed.

9. A drawbeam is sliding or adjustable.

10. Locking of the coupling is not readily verifiable by visual inspection.

11. A coupling locking device is in such condition that it is not effective.

Revoked certifications

12. A drawbeam fitted to a heavy vehicle was last certified by Peter Wastney (PW) of Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd (for sample plates see Figure 12-3-2).

13. A drawbeam fitted to a heavy vehicle was last certified by Patrick Chu (ZC) of Transport and Structure Ltd (for sample plates see Figure 12-3-2).

Modification and repair

(see Note 4)

14. A modification or repair affects the drawbeam and:

- a) the modification is not for the purpose of law enforcement or the provision of emergency services, or
- b) is missing proof of HVS certification, ie the vehicle has been modified or repaired, and:
 - i. no LANDATA record has been entered, or
 - ii. no valid LT400 form from a HVS Certifier of category HVET or HMTD has been presented.

Note 1

Manufacturer's wear limits may be used instead of those stated.

Note 2 Definitions

Coupling means that part of a vehicle that is specifically designed to enable it to be connected to another vehicle; it does not include a structural member of the towing or towed vehicle (eg fifth wheel, hook, pin, ball or socket type).

Drawbeam means that part of the towing vehicle to which a coupling is fitted to enable a heavy trailer to be connected; it includes the attached coupling.

Full trailer means a trailer with two axle sets, the foremost of which is steered by a drawbar; includes a semi-trailer with non-steering axles coupled to a converter dolly.

Note 3

Some special-use vehicles, such as fertiliser trucks and trailers, are fitted with towing connections where the towing eye is fitted to the towing vehicle and the pin- or hook-type coupling to the trailer. This is permitted. In these cases, please refer to heavy trailer pages of section 8-3 for wear limits and other relevant requirements.

Note 4

A towing connection that was certified to New Zealand standard 5446: 1987 (superseded) before November 2007 may continue to comply with and be certified to that standard until the towing connection is modified.

Table 12-3-1. Minimum information on drawbeam certification label/plate

NZS 5446: 1987	NZS 5446: 2007 / NZS5446:2024
Company or agency name	Person, company or agency name
Certifying engineer	Certifier ID
VIN/Chassis number	LT400 number*
Maximum towed mass (kg)	VIN/Chassis number
Expiry date (if certified on or after 1 August 1991)	Maximum towed mass
	Permitted static vertical load (where applicable)**
	Coupling D value (minimum) (where applicable)**
	Expiry date
	NZS 5446

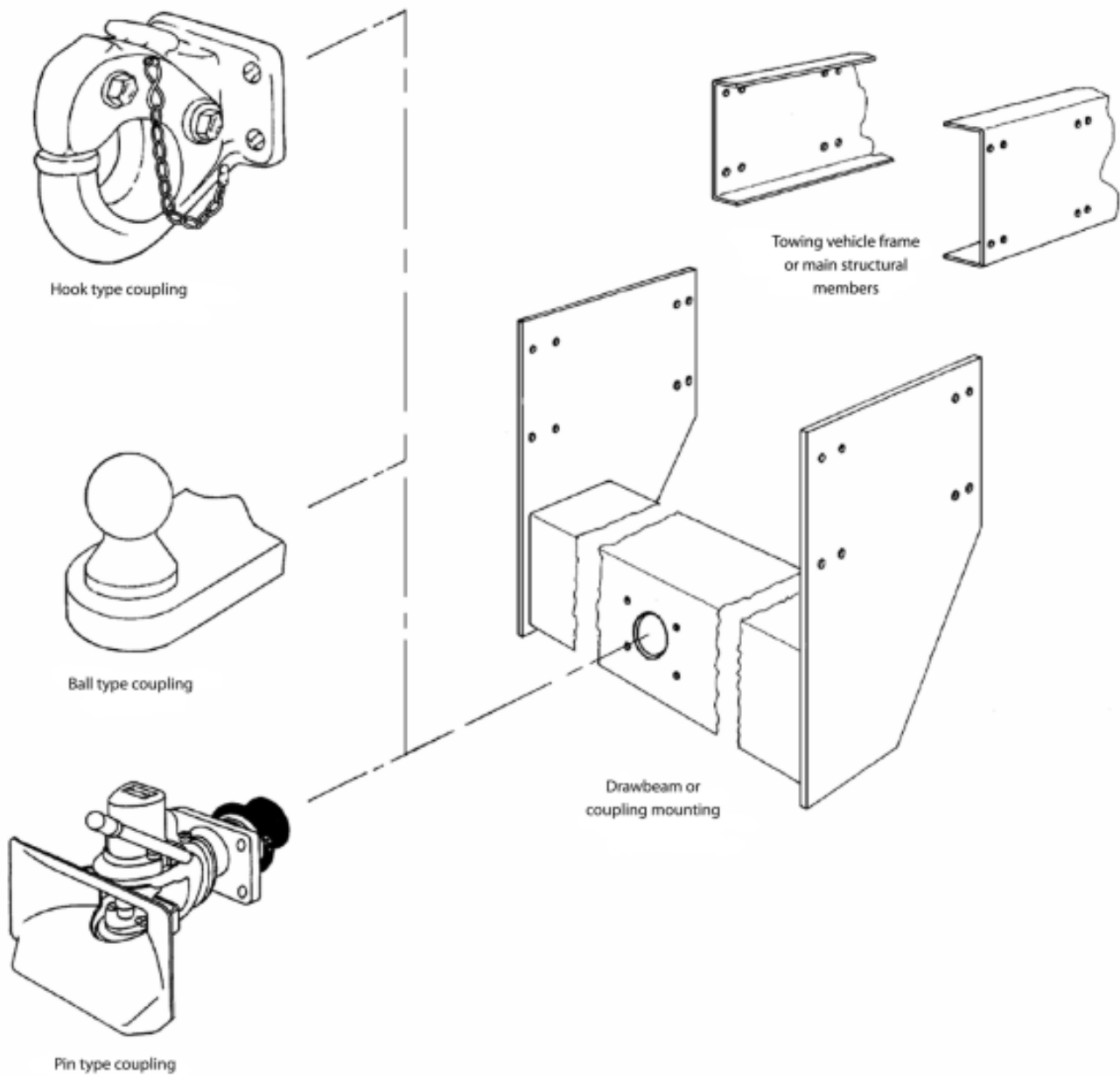
*Prior to 1 December 2016 the engineer's job file number could have been used instead of the LT400 number.

**If these values are not applicable, 'N/A' must be used (from 1 October 2020). Prior to 1 October 2020 the plate may have a blank space or a zero, nil or N/A value.

For example:

- hinged drawbars do not have a vertical load rating
- most pintle hooks/eyes do not have a D value.

Figure 12-3-1. Drawbeam components



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Figure 12-3-2. Sample certification plates (Peter Wastney Ltd and Patrick Chu (ZC) of Transport and Structure Ltd)



Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2002](#)
- [Land Transport Rule: Heavy Vehicles 2004](#)

- New Zealand Standard 5446: 1987, Code of Practice for Heavy Motor Vehicle Towing Connections: Drawbar Trailers
- New Zealand Standard 5446: 2007, Heavy Vehicle Towing Connections – Drawbeams and Drawbars
- **New Zealand Standard 5446:2024, On-road heavy vehicle towing connections – Drawbeams and drawbars.**

Mandatory requirement

1. A drawbeam fitted to a vehicle used in a combination, (other than a tractor to which section 12-4 applies or a recovery service vehicle) must comply and be certified to NZS 5446.

Mandatory equipment

2. A hook- or pin-type coupling must have an effective locking device and a separate means of retaining this device in the locked position.

Condition and performance

3. Towing connection components fitted to a vehicle must ensure that a secure connection can be maintained between the towing and towed vehicles under all conditions of loading and operation for which the vehicle was constructed.

4. A drawbeam used for towing a full trailer must not be sliding or adjustable.

5. Locking of the coupling must be readily verifiable by visual inspection.

Modification and repair

6. A modification or repair that affects the drawbeam must be inspected and certified by an HVS certifier of category HVET or HMTD.